

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0782

STADIS////////////////////////////////

LIMDIS

FOR DEPUTY ASST SEC ARMITAGE, EUR, FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SCUL, OVIP, PFOR, BU

SUBJECT: ZHIVKOVA VISIT

REF: A) STATE 082752; B) SOFIA 0760

1. REFS A AND B CROSSED, BUT I REALIZE YOU STILL WANT MY PERSONAL VIEWS ON HOW WE CAN BEST JUSTIFY HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION TO ZHIVKOVA AND GET MOST BENEFIT OUT OF HER VISIT. MUST CONFESS I WAS TAKEN ABACK BY THE WORD "POSSIBLE" IN THE SUBJECT LINE OF YOUR MESSAGE. EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS, I TRUST, THAT IT IS TOO LATE TO BACK AWAY FROM VISIT. IF IT IS CANCELLED, WHETHER BY HER OR BY US, THERE WOULD BE A PRICE TO PAY; AND A "WOMAN SCORNED" CAN BE FORMIDABLE WHEN SHE IS THE DAUGHTER OF A HEAD OF STATE AND HEAD OF GOVERNMENT PARTY, AND WHEN SHE CONTROLS OUR ACCESS TO THE BULGARIAN MEDIA AND CULTURAL LIFE.

2. YOU ASKED ABOUT MAREV IN CONNECTION WITH THE ZHIVKOVA VISIT. I THINK THE RECORD SHOWS THAT SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF DIVIDED FAMILIES ISSUE WAS SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCED BY DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN HIGH-LEVEL USG VISITORS TO
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BULGARIA (E.G. INGERSOLL AND BUTZ) AND HIGH-LEVEL GOB OFFICIALS. BELIEVE ZHIVKOVA VISIT OFFERS UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO IMPRESS UPON HIGH LEVELS OF GOB THAT MAREV QUESTION IS A SERIOUS MATTER FOR US AND THAT IT WILL NOT GO AWAY. I COULD OF COURSE BE INSTRUCTED TO SEE PRESIDENT ZHIVKOV MYSELF, BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT IF HIS OWN DAUGHTER TELLS HIM ABOUT OUR SERIOUS CONCERN THIS WOULD

IMPRESS HIM MORE THAN IF I TOLD HIM SO.

3. AT THE SAME TIME WE SHOULD HAVE NO ILLUSION WHERE ZHIVKOVA HERSELF WOULD STAND ON SUCH A MATTER. SHE IS VERY CLEARLY A HARDLINER. BUT I THINK WE MUST CONDUCT OURSELVES IN THE MAREV CASE AS IF WE HAD "HIDDEN ALLIES" SOMEWHERE IN SOFIA WHOSE HANDS WE WANT TO STRENGTHEN. WHILE ZHIVKOVA WOULD NOT HERSELF BE SUCH AN ALLY, SHE COULD BRING BACK HER FIRST-HAND IMPRESSION THAT THE MAREV CASE IS REALLY TROUBLING RELATIONS WITH WASHINGTON, AND THIS COULD HELP ANY HIDDEN ALLIES WHO MAY EXIST. IT IS ALSO CERTAINLY TRUE THAT ZHIVKOVA IS VERY MUCH AWARE OF IMPACT OF BULGARIAN ACTIONS ON THE COUNTRY'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION.

4. IN OTHER WORDS, I SEE ABSOLUTELY NO HARM AND SOME POSSIBLE GOOD IN RAISING THE MAREV CASE WITH HER, ALTHOUGH IT WOULD NOT BE HONEST TO JUSTIFY THE VISIT PRINCIPALLY IN TERMS OF THE GOOD IT MIGHT DO BECAUSE PROSPECTS FOR RESOLVING THE MAREV CASE ARE VERY DIM IN ANY EVENT. WE MUST EXPECT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE FORTHCOMING COURT PROCEEDINGS IN VARNA WILL RESULT IN THE MAREVS LOSING THEIR PARENTAL RIGHTS TO A GUARDIAN ON THE GROUNDS OF ABANDONMENT, WHICH MAY HAVE RESULT OF BULGARIANS EVEN DENYING THAT THERE IS A DIVIDED FAMILY. WE SHOULD BE VERY CLEAR THAT TO A CONSIDERABLE EXTENT THIS OUTCOME IS DUE TO ACTIONS OF THE MAREVS THEMSELVES. (INCIDENTALLY, WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO EXPLAIN THIS TO CONGRESS AND THE PRESS SOMETIME.)
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5. YES, I WOULD BE GLAD TO WRITE OR TELEGRAPH SECRETARY CALIFANO ENDORSING A DEPARTMENT REQUEST THAT HE ACT AS NOMINAL HOST FOR ZHIVKOVA. I WOULD CITE ABSENCE OF EXACT EQUIVALENT IN USG TO HER POSITION, IMPORTANCE FOR OUR RELATIONS IN ASSURING PROPER TREATMENT FOR HER, EMBARRASSMENT THAT WOULD RESULT FROM CANCELLATION OF VISIT, AND EFFECT HER VISIT TO WASHINGTON COULD HAVE ON PENDING BILATERAL ISSUES, INCLUDING MAREV CASE.

6. WHILE SECRETARY CALIFANO AS "HOST" FOR VISIT WOULD BE BY FAR THE BEST, AS INDICATED REF B WE MIGHT FALL BACK ON ENDOWMENT. NEITHER BOORSTIN NOR DUFFY LALD DO. CONSIDERING THAT USIA IS IN THE COMMUNICATIONS BUSINESS, AS IS THE COMMITTEE ON ART AND CULTURE, I WONDER WHETHER REINHARDT MIGHT BE ANOTHER FALL-BACK. HE DOESN'T ACTUALLY DO WHAT MRS. ZHIVKOVA DOES, BUT HE HAS SOME CABINET STATUS AND COULD DO A GOOD JOB (AND A PICTURE OF HIM AND ZHIVKOVA WOULD GET US GOOD

PUBLICITY HERE).

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